

FROM HOME TO HUB

Regional Summary



Groundwork SE Regional Team
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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
What is 'Home to Hub'?	4
The Partnership	5
The Four Local Areas	5
THE TRANSPORT CONTEXT	6
Link to Wider Transport Issues	6
Barriers to Reducing Car Use	6
Regional Economic Strategy (RES)	7
Regional Transport Strategy (RTS)	7
THE LOCAL PROJECTS	8
Thames Valley	8
Solent	9
Kent Thames-side	10
Medway	11
THE NEXT STEPS	12
General Findings	12
APPENDIX 1 - EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE	13

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INTRODUCTION

The South East of England is often described as one of the UK’s main gateways with well established ports and airports. It also has a thriving economy in its own right. However, many parts suffer from severe congestion, making journeys often unreliable or protracted, which affects the performance and productivity of the region as a whole. Conversely, there are also pockets of severe deprivation which often have poor transport links.

To help address these issues, a number of Centres across the South East of England have been identified as key areas for transport and other improvements¹. These ‘Hubs’ were chosen based on their existing & potential transport links, but also because of their cultural / economic significance or population size. The proposal is to encourage higher density development, centres for employment and leisure facilities as well as good accessibility by public transport.

It is hoped that this approach will also reduce the pressure for ‘urbanisation’ of the wider South East Region, by concentrating development on some of the existing urban areas.

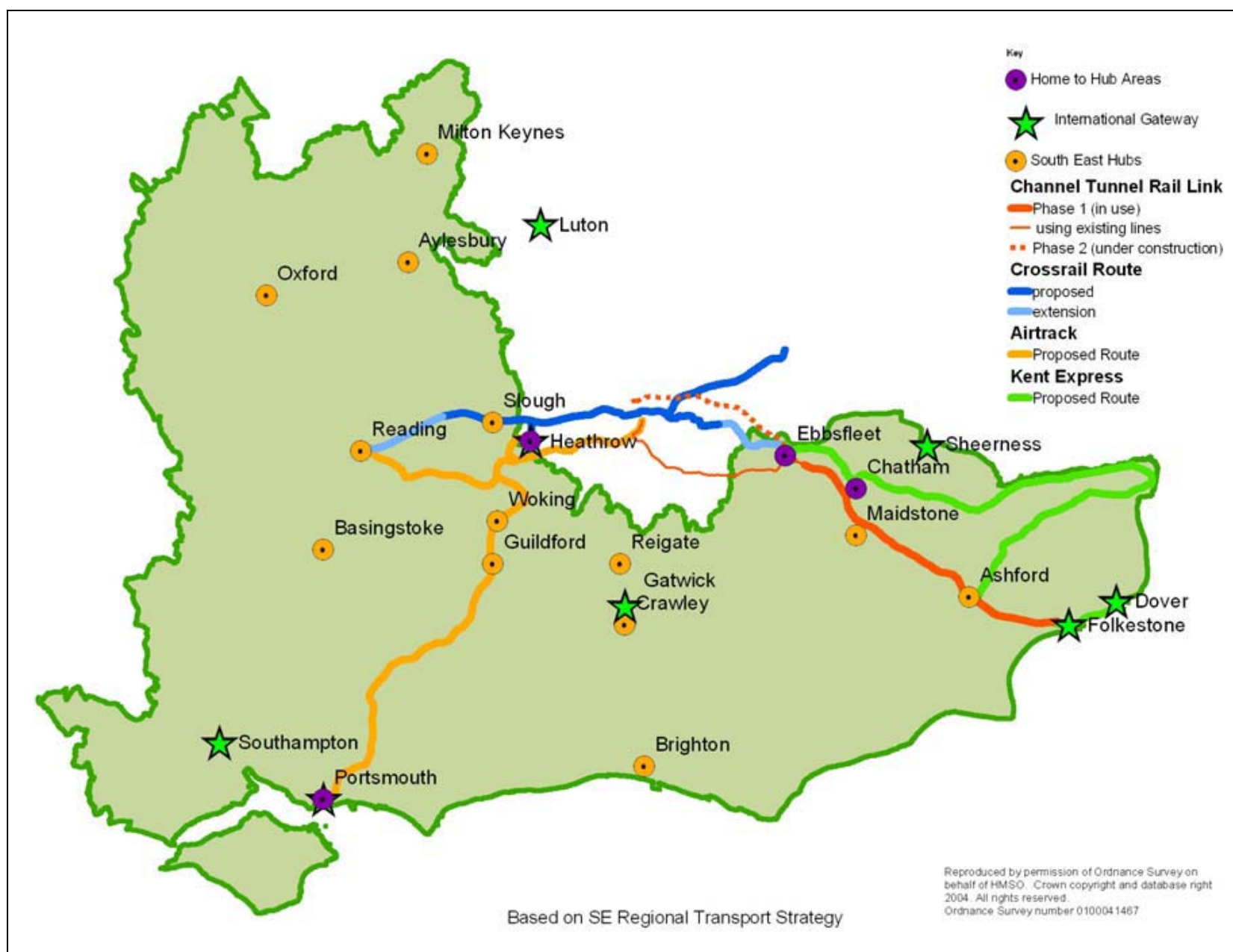


Figure 1

1 - SE Regional Transport Strategy

WHAT IS 'HOME TO HUB'?

Main Concepts

A number major schemes such upgrading of railway lines, construction of new routes or re-location of bus stations are proposed or currently underway in the South East. These will help the hubs shown in Figure 1 to be more accessible by public transport.

The central concept of the 'Home to Hub' programme is to carry out a series of well targeted practical projects around these hubs to improve access for local people.

Delivery

- Research, analyse and map the barriers to sustainable transport use between residential areas and 4 key examples from the major Hubs
- Make recommendations for physical improvements and other initiatives to help overcome these barriers
- Agree and deliver a package of small (4 x £27k) and medium scale (4 x £110k) physical improvement projects (e.g. improved facilities for walkers, cyclists or bus users)



Bristol TM

Development Work



Opportunities for extending the Home to Hub concept to other projects will also be investigated.

Funding Summary

INCOME	TOTAL
SEEDA	225
Groundwork	144
To be raised locally	360
TOTAL	729

Timetable

Phase 1 – Jan 2005 to March 2006 – Research and Implement small-scale physical works

Phase 2 – April 2006 to March 2008 – Implementation of medium-scale physical works

THE PARTNERSHIP

SEEDA

The **South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)** is the Government funded agency set up in 1999 responsible for the economic and social development of the South East of England - the driving force of the UK's economy.

SEEDA aims to be a catalyst for change within the South East, working with partner organisations - businesses, education at all levels, local authorities, Government agencies, voluntary and community organisations and many others - to produce clearly recognisable results. Together with skills and affordable housing, an effective transport system is one of the fundamental requirements for the continuing competitiveness of our region. The South East must move towards a system that supports business securely and reliably and is in balance with the infrastructure needed to support new housing and community needs. We also need to enable sustainable mobility for all in society, recognising that this means much more than simply access to a car.

SEEDA has a key role in facilitating transport projects of significant importance to the regional economy. A number of multiple stakeholder partnerships involving public sector bodies as well as private companies across various sectors have been established to deliver transport projects in the South East.

Groundwork

The other founding regional partner is Groundwork. Groundwork is a community based environmental regeneration organisation and in the SE, consists of a regional office with local Groundwork Trusts that have been working for many years in four of the key Regional Hubs.

Groundwork SE is working at the regional level, to provide co-ordination, sharing of knowledge between the local projects, GIS / Mapping support and supervision of the external evaluation.

The local Groundwork Trusts have an excellent track record of working with community groups, local authorities and the private sector on partnership projects. They are each responsible for the local research, fund-raising and delivery of the practical improvements.

Specialist Support

Transport and Travel Research Ltd are a national consultancy who have specialised in public transport improvements. They have been employed to provide an independent overview of good practice from elsewhere in the country (and abroad), as well as technical advice on the local schemes if required.

Finally, an academic partner is being recruited to provide an independent evaluation of the programme's impact over the 4 years.

THE FOUR LOCAL AREAS

The local areas reflect the contrasting characters of the SE Region, covering the Thames Valley, Thames Gateway and Solent. They also cover different types of Hub, including International air travel (Heathrow), International sea travel (Portsmouth), International rail travel (Ebbsfleet) and an economic regeneration centre (Chatham).

THE TRANSPORT CONTEXT

LINK TO WIDER TRANSPORT ISSUES

The Government's '10 Year Transport Plan' (2000), set out a number of targets to improve public transport and the White Paper of 2004 extended the investment plans for various submissions contained in the 10 Year Plan to 2014-15.

Since the creation of the 10 Year Plan, Local Transport Plans (LTPs) and Annual Progress Reports (APRs) generated by local authorities have reflected aspirations to foster better linkages between transport provision and other areas such as land-use, social exclusion/regeneration, environment and economy. The latest guidance given to local authorities in developing the second round of LTPs reiterates the DfT's target *'to secure improvements to the accessibility, punctuality and reliability of local public transport, with an increase in use of more than 12% by 2010 compared with 2000 levels'*.

The Government's Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) have also carried out several transport related studies because they were concerned that many of the poorest neighbourhoods in England had become isolated from suitable public transport service provision. The SEU identified the need to target groups of 'people' when improving transport rather than just concentrating on operational issues. They recommended the use of 'Accessibility Planning' where the current journey times to key destinations (such as hospitals) are mapped to provide a balanced approach in the development of future service provision.

BARRIERS TO REDUCING CAR USE

The following table lists the main concerns that users give relating to travel by public transport.

Time factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel time including walk access time, wait time, interchange time, and actual travelling time • Scheduling of activities and scheduling of transport services by time of day • Time budgets available to each population group for each trip type
Cost factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transport fares • Affordability for the people concerned
Reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertainty about journey times • Uncertainty about journey quality e.g. availability of a seat
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real and perceived personal security • Real and perceived in vehicle safety
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comfort of waiting areas and vehicles • Attractiveness of walking routes to access PT • Assistance and helpfulness of staff • Support services when travelling e.g. catering
Information and booking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information availability from which to plan journey • Time spent planning and booking journey • Availability of information during journey

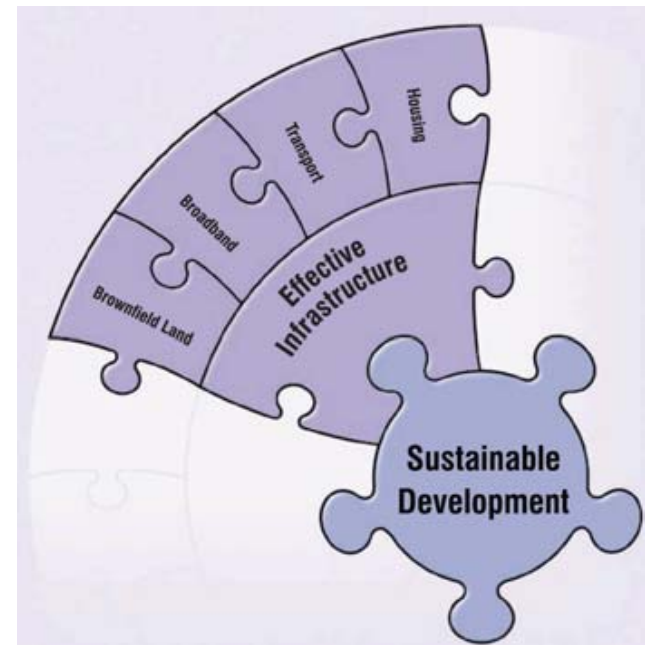
Source: DfT Accessibility Planning: Developing and Piloting Approaches – Inception Report (2003)

Many of these also apply to walking and cycling, although additional concerns can include secure cycle parking and showering for cyclists as well as bad weather.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY (RES)

The follow extracts have been taken from the RES for the South East of England 2002-12, published by SEEDA.

“Together with skills and affordable housing, an effective transport system is one of the fundamental requirements for the continuing competitiveness of the region. Despite the potential of ICT and Broadband to allow flexible and home working and leading to much more complex travel patterns for work, leisure and business there is no sign yet of a reduction in the demand for public and private transport. How best to accommodate this demand in a sustainable way to enable efficient movement of people and freight around the region is at the heart of the RES.”



“The region must face up to the challenge of congestion. It is now widely accepted across the business sector as well as environmental interests that the link between economic growth and the growth in road traffic must be weakened. This means recognising that demand management is an integral part of the overall transport policy for the region, alongside the necessary investment in public transport and road schemes. In most of the region’s larger urban areas, dealing with road traffic congestion is an essential element of urban renaissance.”

The RES also highlights key actions from the Regional Transport Strategy (see below) ‘that are central to achieving economic development and competitiveness objectives for the region’:

- Several locations in the region act as major transport interchanges. Airtrack would reinforce the continued success of Heathrow and improve connections to the western part of the region.
- CTRL will radically transform the prospects of Thames Gateway based on the new international station at Ebbsfleet and especially the ability to provide domestic rail services to the Medway Towns. In addition, substantial infrastructure is needed to implement Thames Gateway proposals, including additional crossings of the Thames and public transport schemes such as Fastrack.
- The regeneration priority areas of the south coast have been examined comprehensively as part of the South Coast Multi-Modal Study. This recommends a balanced package of transport solutions to improve access between the south coast towns and radially to London, and these should be pursued with utmost urgency.

REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY (RTS)

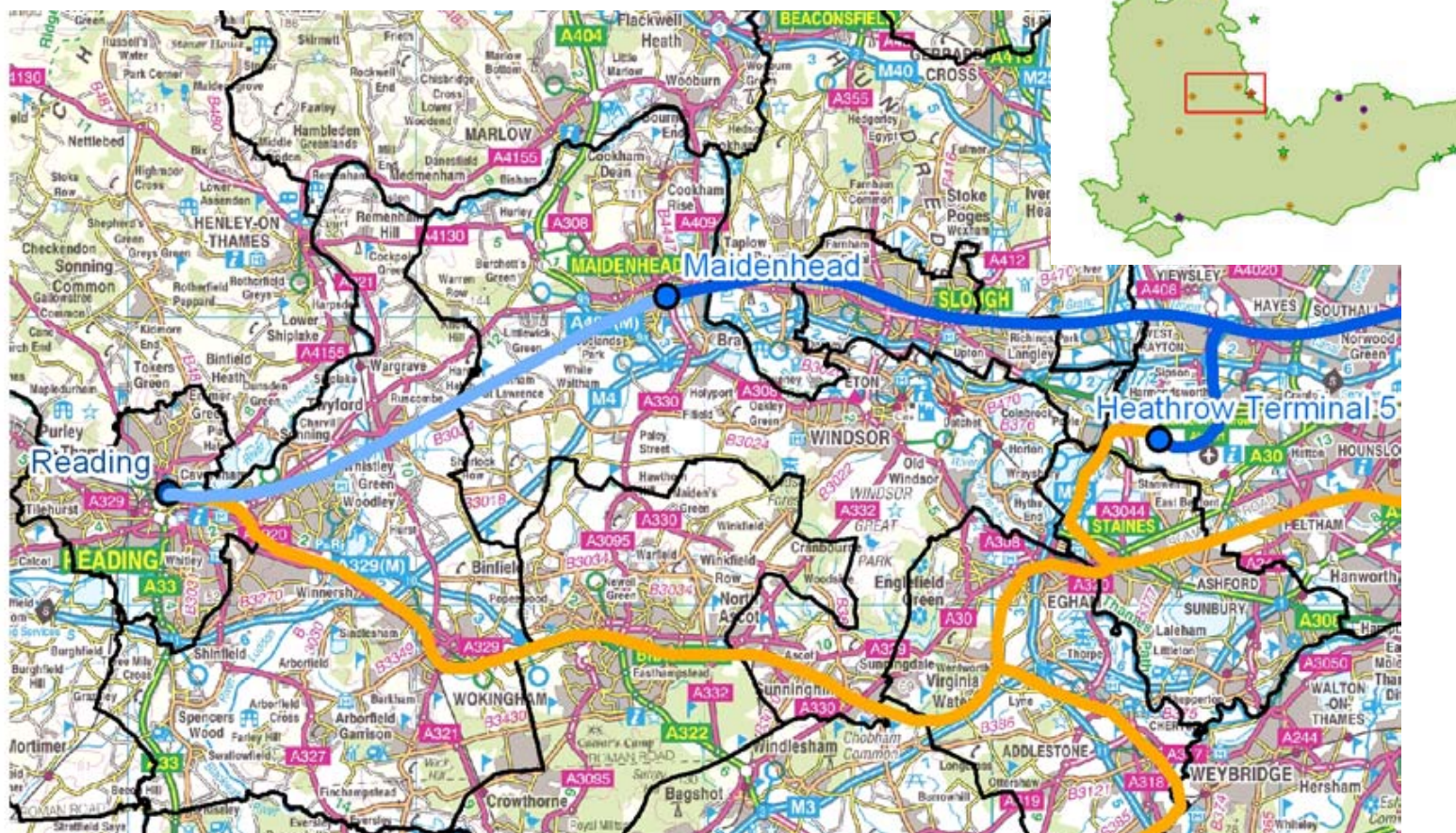
The creation of a Regional Transport Strategy in 2004 by the Government Office for the South East (GOSE) is a tool that extends on national policy and helps to underpin more local policies. Several of the RTS policies support the Home to Hub concept, in particular, the RTS identifies those locations (in a horizon up to 2016) that have the potential to act as regional hubs for development in the South East. Additionally, Policy 9.25 states:

‘Regional Hubs should be the focus for investment in order to achieve a high level of accessibility. Investment priorities should focus on improving the overall level of public transport accessibility, together with the overall quality of the walking and cycling environment, as part of a comprehensive programme to develop an integrated transport system serving the regional hub.’

THE LOCAL PROJECTS

THAMES VALLEY

Introduction



The Thames Valley is acknowledged as one of the UK's leading economic centres. However, according to a recent study commissioned by the Thames Valley Economic Partnership "Congestion is now threatening the accessibility of the Thames Valley and the quality of life of those who live and work there".

Choosing the Home to Hub Area

Although just outside the SE Region, Heathrow Airport exerts a powerful effect on the South East and many of the proposed rail, road or bus improvements for Heathrow will take place in the South East. The development of Terminal 5 (which is due to open in March 2008) also increases the importance of good access from the west. Although Reading was considered as a project area (it has the second largest rail interchange outside London), Heathrow provided more opportunities to develop the Home to Hub concept.

The Local Projects

Previous employee surveys have shown that 50% of employees live within five miles of the airport and that high numbers of employees live in both Staines and Slough. New cycle facilities are being created within the airport and as part of landscaping schemes immediately to the west of the airport, however, the challenge remains to provide direct, safe routes from the residential areas to the airport. The 'Home to Hub' projects will concentrate on improvements for cyclists coming from the south and west.

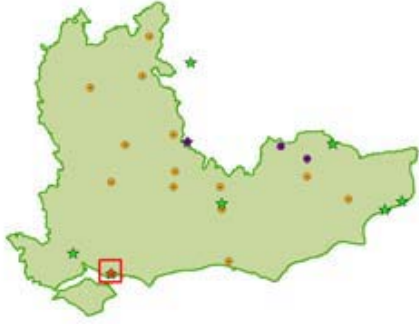
Local Partners

Key partners have included:

- Heathrow Area Transport Forum, which brings together airport companies, local authorities, interest groups and service providers
- Slough BC and Surrey CC
- Local cycling forums

SOLENT

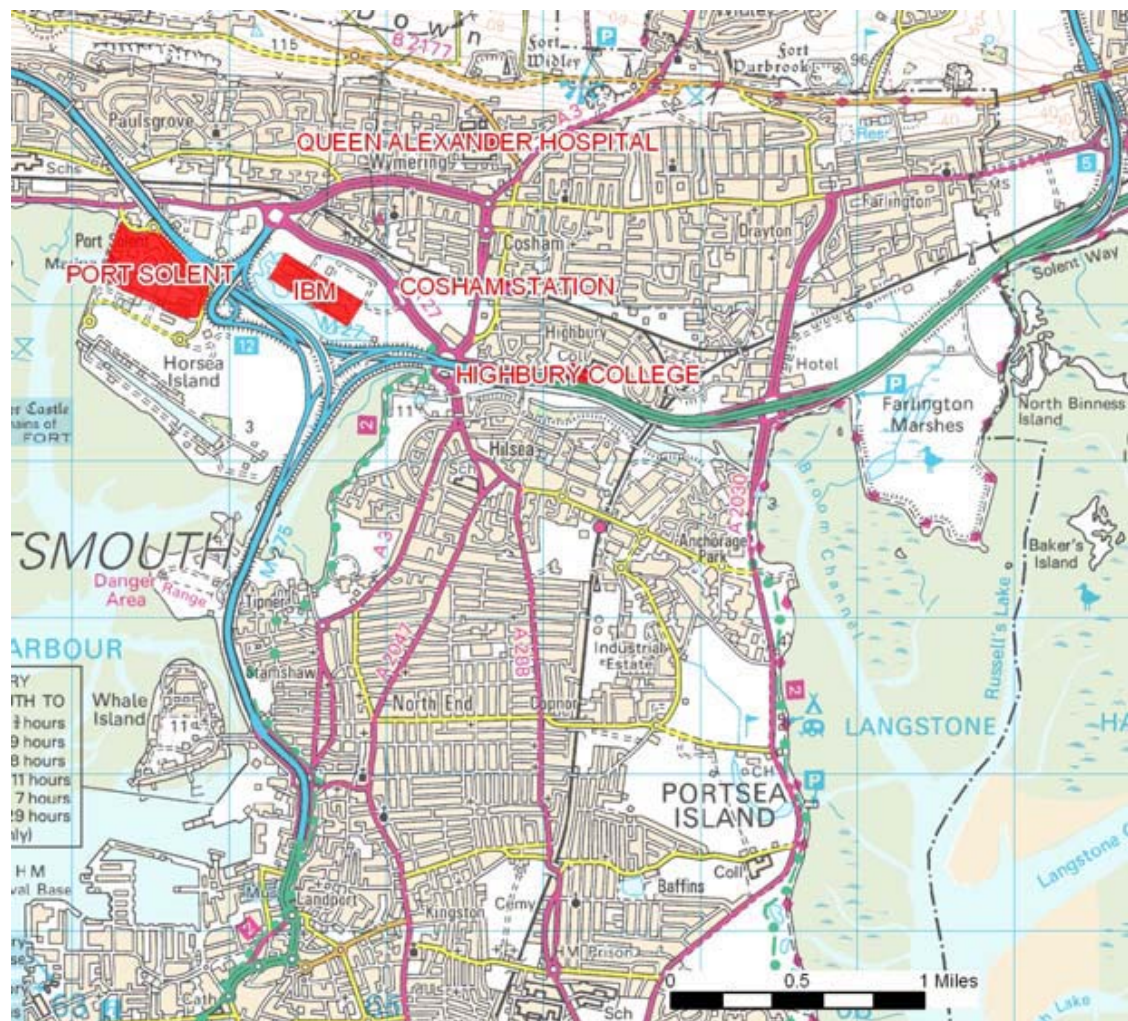
Introduction



The area is densely populated and population is forecast to grow significantly in the next 5-10 years. Gosport is on a peninsula with one main road leading in/out and no train station. Portsmouth too is effectively on a peninsula with the motorway splitting the city in two. These factors and the fact that Portsmouth provides access to Europe via its port, have a large impact on the amount of traffic congestion in the area.

Choosing the Home to Hub Area

The first of these areas is the **Western Road** part of North Portsmouth. This is home to a business park and accommodates the large IBM site and Highbury College. It is also near Queen Alexander hospital, as well as the Port Solent leisure and retail area. The nearest rail station is Cosham but bus and cycle links to key sites from the station are not direct. It is also difficult to travel from the south of Portsmouth to these sites without changing buses or mode of transport, which discourages sustainable travel.



The second project area will be within Gosport. Discussions have been held with Hampshire County Council on raising awareness within Gosport of the possibilities of using sustainable transport as well as expanding HCC's current schemes that produce targeted marketing and promotion to individual areas / houses.

The Local Projects

The initial project will consist of a roadshow to consult employees, adult cycle training and improvements to cycle routes in the Western Road area. The main project will be to develop a residential travel plan in an area within Gosport.

Local Partners

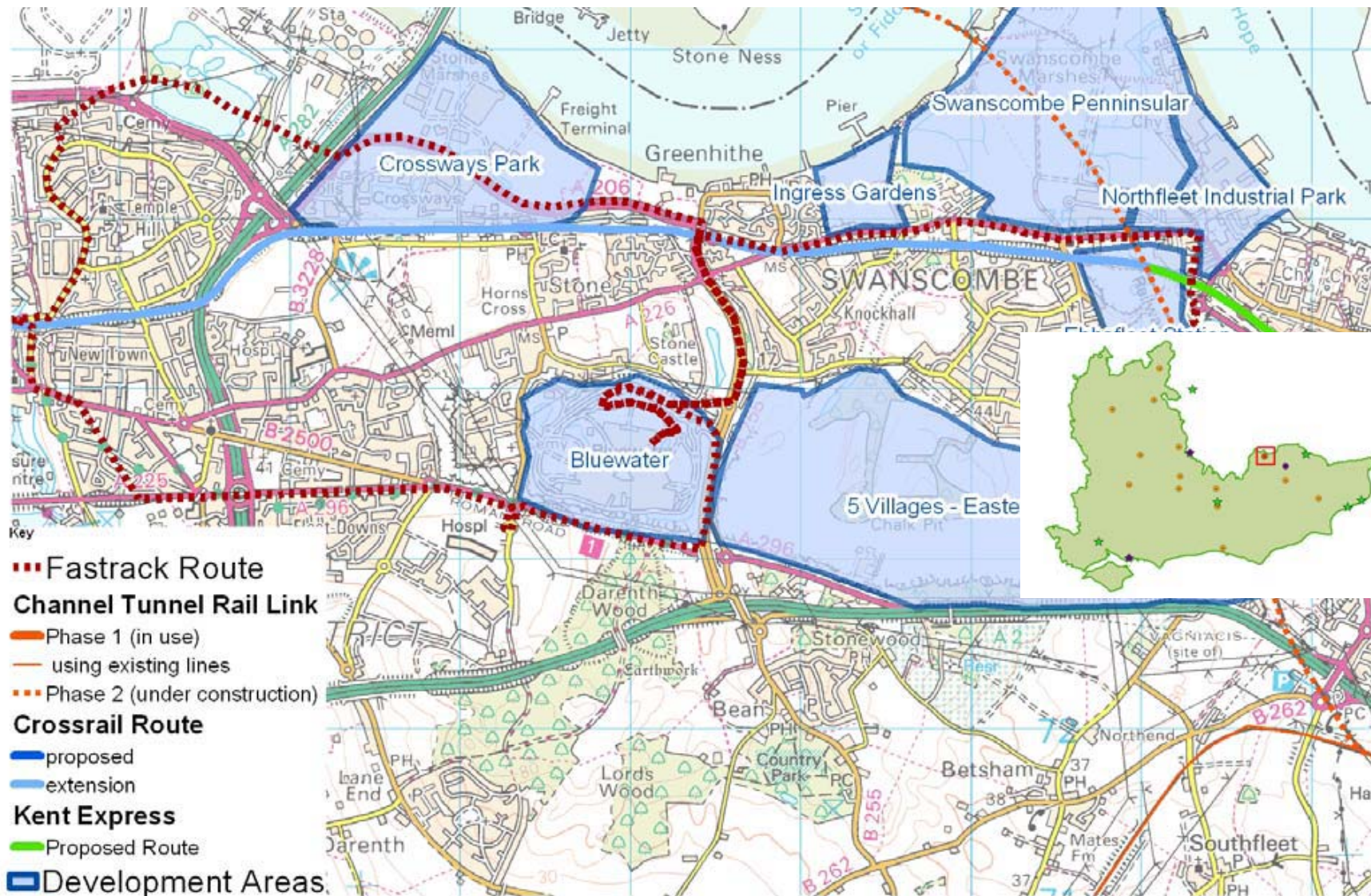
Key partners have included:

- Portsmouth City Council and Hampshire County Council
- The *SignPOST* Forum at Portsmouth City Council enabled a number of businesses to be consulted on the research phase of the project
- Local cycling forums
- First Bus

KENT THAMES-SIDE

Introduction

The map shows the scale of the recent, current and proposed developments around the established communities of Swanscombe and Greenhithe. Because Ebbsfleet won't be operational for international services until 2007 and domestic services until 2012, this posed a problem when consulting people on what they felt was a 'hypothetical' issue. It was therefore decided to focus consultation around access to Ebbsfleet and the use of "Fastrack".



Choosing the Home to Hub Area

Local stakeholder meetings were held in both Greenhithe and Swanscombe and invitations delivered to 2000 households. The initial results showed higher levels of concern in Swanscombe and so this area will be the focus of the projects. Issues of concern to local people included:

- Lack of Information on Fastrack routes
- Extra car traffic from the new developments
- Cost of tickets
- The need for extra routes

The Local Projects

The initial project will focus on information provision to people in Swanscombe through a number of means including boards and specially trained mobile travel advisors. A community transport brokerage will also be supported. The main project will improve the foot/cycle links from Swanscombe to Ebbsfleet station.

Local Partners

Key partners have included:

- Dartford BC, Gravesham BC, Kent CC
- Arriva Travel, South East Trains
- Kent Thameside Delivery Board
- Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council

MEDWAY

Introduction

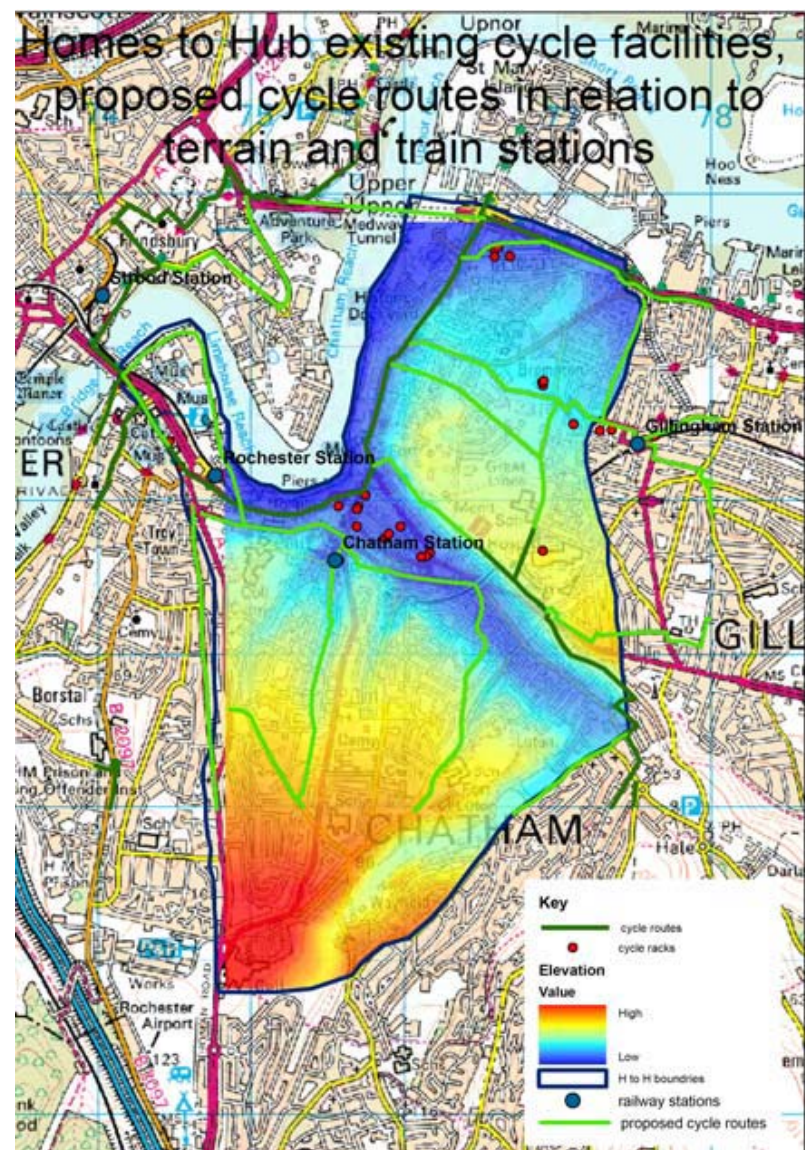
Along with other key parts of the Thames Gateway, Chatham has been identified as a Regional priority for regeneration and growth, requiring substantial improvement to the transport system if growth is to be realised. Major changes are proposed for the town centre to reduce the impact of cars and make better links between the town centre, the river and surrounding communities.



Choosing the Home to Hub Area

Previous consultation and surveys undertaken by the local authority and Sustrans had identified several sites where improvements were needed that would compliment the larger schemes.

As well as the usual problems of working with an existing street network, Chatham's steep hills are a major constraint making some potential routes more suitable than others.



The Local Projects

The initial pilot project will concentrate on improving pedestrian/cycle access to the station. The main project will involve improving an access from Railway St used by a great many people coming to and from the station every day. Work will include landscaping a small but prominent piece of derelict land and improving signing.



Local Partners

Key partners have included:

- Medway C, Kent CC
- Sustrans



THE NEXT STEPS

In each of the four project areas, the concept of Home to Home has been recognised by local partners as being able to help address transport, economic and social problems. The initial local projects range from information provision in Swanscombe, area-based transport plans in Portsmouth to pedestrian improvements in Chatham and traffic schemes near Heathrow.

The research phase has also identified additional schemes that can now be used to raise additional funding for transport projects in the local areas.

GENERAL FINDINGS

The major infrastructure projects being built in the South East can provide the impetus and focus for local schemes to improve transport facilities, which can in turn reduce car usage.

There is a recognised need to invest in the areas around the hubs and the public transport links to them to ensure that their potential is realised.

Many of the poorest neighbourhoods have become isolated from suitable public transport service provision. This, connected with low levels of car ownership and a general lack of local amenities such as shops, healthcare and banks can mean that communities aren't considered as desirable origins or destinations.

The provision of real-time information (either at stops, to mobile phones or over the internet) can be the most cost-effective way to increase public transport usage if services are already in place.

Schemes that have been able to improve integration (say between bus and train) whether through information to drivers of connecting services, through ticketing or better physical links have also increased usage.

Partnerships between local authorities, private operators and local communities are the most effective means to create improvements

APPENDIX 1 - EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

The purpose of this section is to review comparable schemes that have been carried out elsewhere in the country.

Manchester Airport

Manchester itself already provides a range of passenger information services, which are delivered through information centres, call centres and kiosks. In addition there are highly developed information services at Manchester Airport.

As an example of adopting best practice and as part of the European 'ITIS' project (Intermodal Traveller Information Systems), Manchester Airport is now looking to:

- Extend the scope and content of the above services.
- Support information provision through mobile channels.
- Seek to make airport information remotely available.



Lessons learnt

Starting from a baseline of service provision or recognising and further exploiting the development of established services that benefit transport between Home and Hub (e.g. information provision), represents a sensible approach to making improvements in an area.

Investigating the possibilities that exist to integrate existing public transport systems and encourage integration between different modes is essential for providing a range of sustainable travel options from Home to Hub.

Costs

The cost associated with the installation of Real Time Passenger Information hardware in Manchester is about £110,000 over a 5 year period, plus other costs such as staff time.

Clitheroe Interchange



In Lancashire, the award-winning Clitheroe Interchange incorporates various improvements. The measures implemented by Lancashire County Council (LCC) have increased flexibility and the options available to bus, rail and cycle users as well as pedestrians. They include the following:

- A staffed information office open seven days a week (until the departure of the last bus/rail service) providing details and

tickets for all bus/rail services connecting with the interchange and throughout the wider Ribble Valley area.

- When a train is delayed, its progress is plotted using an information system which enables instructions to be passed on to waiting bus drivers of the fact that they need to wait for the service. In the case of a service being severely delayed, a replacement bus service will be provided.
- New bus stops, with heated waiting area and CCTV are located directly outside the railway station.
- Free Park & Ride provision for bus and rail users and secure cycle storage

Lessons learnt

Making even small changes to public transport interchanges can help to improve the 'attractiveness' of the facility to users of different modes. The deployment of a package of measures has won best practice recognition and enhanced the number of options available to travellers in the rural area by considering how different modes can link with one another.

Costs

The fact that multi-modal improvements can bear relevance to multiple policy areas and strategies, means that they might also qualify under multiple funding streams. It is desirable to ensure that measures achieve as much as possible in influencing as many other wider objectives, such as regeneration, social exclusion, accessibility and public transport patronage in order to tap into the resources available.

Plusbus

'Plusbus' is a combined bus-rail ticket that can be bought as a supplement to other train tickets, enabling travel by bus at either end of a train journey. It allows unlimited travel on most bus services on a network surrounding a participating station for a whole day. Travel information about the local bus network is available at participating stations so that the user can assess the scope of travel possible.

Plusbus is co-ordinated by 'Journey Solutions', an initiative led by the UK's major rail and bus operators and aimed at promoting and improving integration between transport modes. It is independently funded by the operators via the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT) and the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC). It is also supported by the government and Commission for Integrated Transport.

Since 2002, 135 stations have joined the scheme and it is intended for roll-out to every large town in England, Scotland and Wales.

Lessons learnt

The above is a key example of partnership within the private sector to provide integrated options for public transport.

Costs

The Plusbus option can represent better value than buying the standard train ticket, followed by an equivalent all day bus pass, and can also be bought in one transaction.